

(d) The steps taken to improve DTC service in the next six months are :—

1. Maintenance of DTC vehicles as per the recommendations of Chassis Manufacturers.
2. Replacement of old buses by new buses.
3. Augmentation of DTC fleet by adding private buses.
4. Improvement of crew behaviour and quality of service.
5. Prompt grievance redressal for staff, commuters accident victims and suppliers etc.
6. Route rationalisation.

Proposal to Reinforce and Widen Nizamuddin Bridge in Delhi

451. SHRI M. V. CHANDRA-SHEKERA MURTHY : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to reinforce and widen the Nizamuddin Bridge in Delhi in view of the growing density of traffic;

(b) whether the condition of the bridge is safe and sound for vehicles;

(c) whether almost the entire bridge is in darkness at night; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to provide sufficient lighting arrangements on the bridge ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) Yes, Sir. Studies are being carried out in this regard.

(b) Yes, Sir. However, certain load and speed restrictions have been enforced in view of increased traffic.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, provision of an improved lighting system is under consideration.

[Translation]

Utilisation of Seized Gold and Silver

452. SHRI MORESHWAR SAVE : SHRI HARI KEWAL PRA-SAD :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity of smuggled gold and silver seized during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the authority under whose custody it is kept; and

(c) how it is utilised by the Government to improve the financial situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH) : (a) The quantity of smuggled gold and silver seized during the last three years, year-wise, is given below :

Year	Gold (in Kgs. approx.)	Silver (in Kgs. approx.)
1988	6,094	16,992
1989	8,215	99,322
1990	5,596	2,20,313

(b) The seized gold and silver, after complying with necessary legal formalities, are taken from the custody of Customs Collectorates and are deposited in India Government Mints for safe custody till disposal.

(c) The confiscated gold is used by Reserve Bank of India and State Bank of India to operate important schemes like Gold Jewellery Export Promotion and Replenishment Scheme and to strengthen the economy through the sale or mortgage of gold if necessary. Since October, 1990, the confiscated silver is also being sold in the domestic markets at domestic price.

Bank Loans to Farmers

453. **SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any public sector bank has launched the scheme to provide short-term loans to the farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount of loans received by the farmers through various banks during the last three years;

(d) whether the Government propose to launch any new schemes to provide short-term and long-term loans to the farmers; and

(e) if so, the action taken in this regard so far ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b) All public sector banks provide short term loans by way of crop loans on an on going basis. Such loans are provided to farmers for seasonal crops for both kharif and rabi seasons. Such loans are granted as per scale of finance approved for different crops. Loans granted to farmers are treated as agricultural advances for which the rate of interest are concessional and margin and security norms are liberal. For all agricultural loans upto Rs. 10,000 both short term and term loans, no margin is to be taken by banks. For loans in excess of Rs. 10,000 banks may take margin between 15% and 25% depending upon the purpose and quantum of loan. Further no collateral security by way of mortgage of land or charge on land or third party guarantee is to be obtained by banks for crop loans upto Rs. 10,000 and term loans upto Rs. 40,000 where moveable assets are created.

(c) The amount of direct agricultural advances outstanding during the last three years from public sector banks are as follows :

As at the end of	Amount (Rs. in crores)
March 1989	12,833
March 1990	15,082
March 1991	15,857